Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 12, line 4, with the following amended paragraph:

The type of YAG laser which has a beam shape that is circular irradiates a strong light (flash lamp and laser diode, hereinafter denoted by LD) for exciting a cylindrical crystal rod, thereby obtaining laser oscillation. On the other hand, the type of YAG laser which has a beam shape that is rectangular irradiates a strong light to a parallelepiped crystal rod that structures a system called a zigzag [[slub]] slab, thereby obtaining laser oscillation.

Please replace the paragraphs between page 13, line 2, and page 14, line 9, with the following amended paragraphs:

A system conceived for the purpose of restraining the above thermal lens effect is a zigzag [[slub]] slab system of the YAG laser. The structure of the zigzag [[slub]] slab system of the YAG laser will be briefly explained with reference to Fig. 2 in the following.

The rod system YAG laser obtains laser oscillation by excitation of the cylindrical crystal called a crystal rod. However, in the case of the zigzag [[slub]] slab system YAG laser, the shape of the crystal rod is parallelepiped. A parallelepiped crystal 202 is irradiated by excitation lamps 203a and 203b, for example, an LD and a flash lamp, to thereby obtain laser oscillation. Electric power is supplied to the excitation lamps 203a and 203b from a power source 208. Furthermore, the parallelepiped crystal 202 is cooled by a cooler 207.

Arranging resonant mirrors 201 and 204 diagonally to the parallelepiped crystal 202 is a characteristic of the zigzag [[slub]] slab system. The resonant mirrors 201 and

204 are arranged ~~parallelly~~ parallel in a state facing each other and sandwiching the parallelepiped crystal 202. Each of the surfaces of the parallelepiped crystal 202 and the resonant mirrors [[have]] has no parallel positional relationship. By appropriately adjusting the positional relationship, light reflected from the resonant mirrors will advance in a zigzag way within the parallelepiped crystal. When laser is oscillated at this point in this state, a large amount of light will exit from a side surface of the parallelepiped crystal resulting in a large lost of energy, and thus becoming unusable. In order to prevent this drawback, reflector mirrors 205 and 206 are arranged at the side surfaces of the parallelepiped crystal to thereby prevent light escaping from the parallelepiped crystal 202. Gold-plated mirrors, for example, may be used as the reflector mirrors 205 and 206.

Please replace the paragraph bridging pages 16-17, with the following amended paragraph:

The inventors of the present invention have selected a zigzag [[slub]] slab system YAG laser, which has a rectangular beam shape, as the appropriate YAG laser for employment in the crystallization of a semiconductor film. In the present invention, it is important that the shape of the beam is rectangular, and there is no particular problem in using a YAG laser of a different system. However, the present inventor considers the zigzag [[slub]] slab system as the most suitable system among the current systems of the YAG laser at present. Further, the laser irradiation apparatus disclosed in the present specification is not particularly limited to one that emits a rectangular laser beam, but a laser irradiation apparatus that emits a circular laser beam may also be used.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 32, line 1, with the following amended paragraph:

Fig. 2 is a view illustrating the structure of a YAG laser of a zigzag [[slub]] slab system;

Please replace the paragraph bridging pages 36-37, with the following amended paragraph:

Fig. 13 is a view illustrating a laser irradiation apparatus. The laser irradiation apparatus shown in Fig. 13 is one example of an apparatus that irradiates a linear laser beam to a substrate. The structure thereof is the same as the optical system shown in Fig. 1. A laser beam is processed into a 115 mm long and 0.5 mm wide linear laser beam by the optical system shown in Fig. 13. Because the length of the linear laser beam is 115 mm, it is scanned in one direction to the 5 inch square (about 125 mm) substrate, whereby almost the entire surface of the substrate can be irradiated with the laser beam. The optical system illustrated in Fig. 13 is one example thereof. The linear laser beam is imaged on the a-Si film. The size of the above-mentioned linear laser beam is the size of the beam when imaged on the a-Si film. The structure of the optical system is explained in the following. A pulse oscillation type YAG laser oscillator 1301 oscillates a laser beam having a fundamental wave (wavelength of 1065 nm), a second harmonic (wavelength of 533 nm), and a third harmonic (wavelength of 355 nm). The above-mentioned YAG laser is a zigzag [[slub]] slab system YAG laser. The sizes of the above laser beams at the exit of the respective laser beams are 6 x 12 mm and rectangular in shape. Further, the largest outputs of the laser beams are 800 mJ/pulse at the second harmonic and 400 mJ/pulse at the third harmonic. A largest repetitive frequency is 30 Hz and a pulse width is 10 ns.